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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

*International Standards
for Food Products*

Who Speaks for the U.S.?



CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



What it is

The Codex Alimentarius Commission is an international body established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO). It is charged with the responsibility of developing and establishing international standards for foods. The purpose of these food standards is to protect the consumer's health and facilitate world trade. The Commission first met in 1962 under the joint auspices of FAO and WHO. Any government that is a member of FAO or WHO may send representatives to scheduled meetings.

The standards adopted by the Codex Commission are published in its official publication—**Codex Alimentarius**—or food code. These standards will provide sellers and buyers around the world with uniform criteria for trading and protect consumers by providing a sound, wholesome product, correctly identified.

The **Codex Alimentarius** will include standards for all principal foods, whether processed or raw, for distribution to consumers. A Codex Standard for a given commodity is essentially a standard of identity. That is, the standard describes and identifies the commodity for many factors, including its ingredients and, where applicable, residues and additives. The standard further specifies labeling requirements, sampling and testing procedures, and requirements for hygiene, including protective measures and safeguards to assure a sound, wholesome, and marketable product.

Acceptance of Codex Standards by individual countries is strictly voluntary.

Why This is Important to the U.S.

The United States has a vital interest in the standards, both as an exporter and importer. International standards could have a marked impact on U.S. shipments both to and from other countries.

It is important for the United States to participate

actively in the standards development work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, seeking wherever possible to have the standards reflect acceptable marketing and manufacturing practices and also good food law regulations. All industry views and recommendations on the standards, as well as the U.S. Government proposals, are public information available to any interested person.

The Role of the U.S.

Much of the work of the Commission is conducted through its committees, each chaired by one of the participating countries. The United States chairs three committees—Food Hygiene, Processed Fruit and Vegetable, and Poultry Meat.

The United States, in addition, sends government representatives and industry advisors to take part in the work of most Codex Committees, and in this way has an opportunity to use its extensive experience to help in the establishing of workable definitive standards.

The U. S. Codex contact point for coordinating this work with FAO/WHO and foreign governments is Ralph W. Phillips, Director, International Organizations Staff, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. participation in the work of the Commission is headed by Codex Coordinator George R. Grange, Deputy Administrator, Marketing Services, Consumer and Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. representatives on Codex Alimentarius Commission committees welcome your comments or questions. Subsidiary bodies of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and current representatives include:

Joint FAO/WHO Committee of Government Experts on the Code of Principles Concerning Milk and Milk Products.

Purpose: to establish international standards of composition and standard methods of sampling and analysis for milk and milk products.

U. S. Representative: F. E. Fenton, Dairy Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Food Additives

Purpose: to recommend international tolerances for individual food additives in specific food items.

U. S. Representative: O. G. Fitzhugh
Division of Toxicological
Evaluation

Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues

Purpose: to recommend international tolerances for pesticide residues in specific food products.

U. S. Representative: O. G. Fitzhugh
Division of Toxicological
Evaluation
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Codex Committee on Food Hygiene

Purpose: to develop basic principles for food plant sanitation and for handling food in international trade.

U. S. Representative: William V. Eisenberg
Division of Microbiology
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Codex Committee on Food Labeling

Purpose: to draft provisions on labeling applicable to all foods.

U. S. Representative: J. K. Kirk
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Crystal Plaza No. 6
Arlington, Virginia 20204

Codex Committee on General Principles

Purpose: to define the purpose and scope of the Codex Alimentarius.

U. S. Representative: George R. Grange
Deputy Administrator,
Marketing Services
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling

Purpose: to determine the best method of analysis and sampling for the products for which Codex Standards are in preparation.

U. S. Representative: William Horwitz
Bureau of Science
ACS, Food and Drug
Administration
U. S. Department of Health,

Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate

Purpose: to recommend international standards for cocoa products and chocolate.

U. S. Representative: Lowrie M. Beacham
Division of Food Standards
and Additives
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Codex Committee on Sugars

Purpose: to recommend international standards for all types of carbohydrate sweetening.

U. S. Representative: John A. Hupfer
ASCS-Farmer Program Division
Direct Payments Branch
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Fats and Oils

Purpose: to recommend international standards for fats and oils of animal, vegetable, and marine origin including margarine and olive oil.

U. S. Representative: Morris H. Neustadt
Grain Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Beltsville, Maryland 20705

Codex Committee on Meat and Meat Products

Purpose: to recommend international standards for classification and grading of carcasses and cuts of beef, lamb, mutton, pork, and veal, and establish definitions, labeling and other requirements for processed meats.

U. S. Representative: John C. Pierce
Livestock Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products

Purpose: to recommend international standards for fresh, frozen, or otherwise processed fish.

U. S. Representative: Joseph W. Slavin
Bureau of Commercial Fisheries
U. S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Codex Committee on Poultry Meat

Purpose: to recommend international standards for poultry and poultry meat products.

U. S. Representative: H. Connor Kennett, Jr.

Poultry Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Dietetic Foods

Purpose: to develop general guidelines, principles and standards for selected dietetic foods.

U. S. Representative: Phillip Harris
Division of Nutrition
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables

Purpose: to recommend international standards for all types of processed fruits and vegetables.

U. S. Representative: Fred Dunn
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Codex Committee on Honey

Purpose: to recommend international standards for all types of honey.

U. S. Representative: David A. Patton
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

Joint *ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Fruit Juices

Purpose: to recommend international standards for fruit juices.

U. S. Representative: Lowrie M. Beacham
Division of Food Standards
and Additives
Food and Drug Administration
U. S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20204

Joint *ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Quick Frozen Foods

Purpose: to recommend international standards for quick frozen foods but not including meat, poultry, fish and fruit juices.

U. S. Representative: Fred Dunn
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Consumer and Marketing Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250

*ECE—Economic Commission for Europe